

HERGÉ

THE ADVENTURES OF

TINTIN

EXPLORERS ON THE MOON

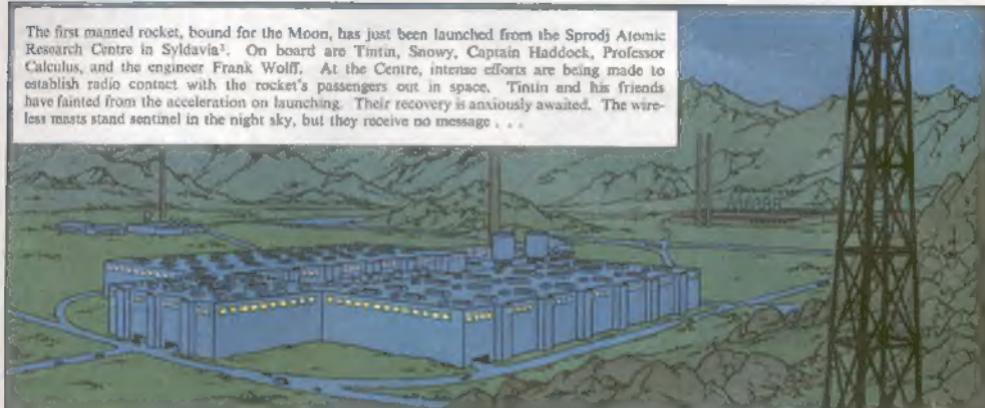


MAMMOT

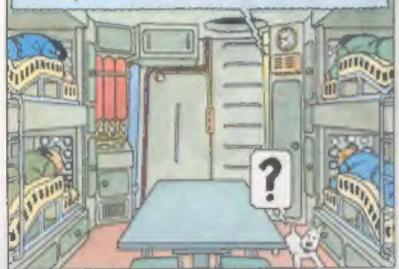


EXPLORERS ON THE MOON

The first manned rocket, bound for the Moon, has just been launched from the Sprodj Atomic Research Centre in Sylvania¹. On board are Tintin, Snowy, Captain Haddock, Professor Calculus, and the engineer Frank Wolff. At the Centre, intense efforts are being made to establish radio contact with the rocket's passengers out in space. Tintin and his friends have fainted from the acceleration on launching. Their recovery is anxiously awaited. The wireless masts stand sentinel in the night sky, but they receive no message . . .



Earth calling Moon-Rocket... Are you receiving me?... Earth calling Moon-Rocket...



Snowy!... D'you want to... Why, what's happened to me? Oh yes... the launching, and that frightful crushing sensation... I was well and truly knocked out.



Earth calling Moon-Rocket... Are you receiving me?

Earth! It's Earth calling us!



Moon-Rocket calling Earth... This is Tintin here. I've just come round... I'll go and see how the others are.



I'm very well, thanks! But you aren't seriously trying to make me believe we're on the way to the Moon, are you?



Moon-Rocket to Earth... The Captain has just come round... Oh, and there's the Professor recovering...



Earth to Moon-Rocket... You are now 2,500 miles from the Earth. Your course is exactly as estimated.



Two thousand Five hundred miles from the Earth! Do you realise what an extraordinary adventure this is for us?... It's unbelievable!... It makes one's head spin!

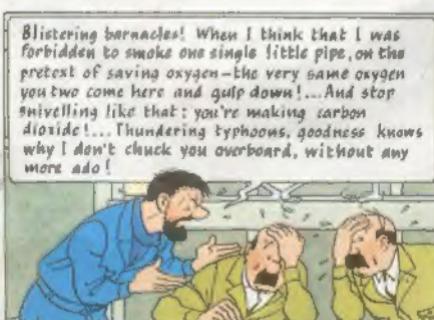
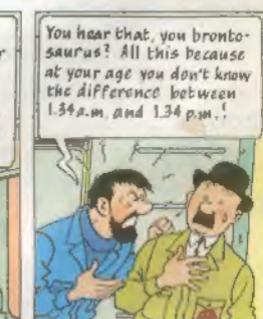
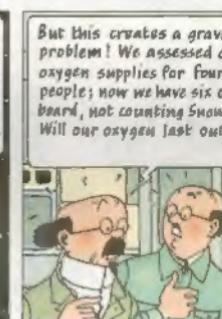
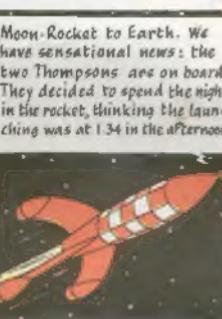
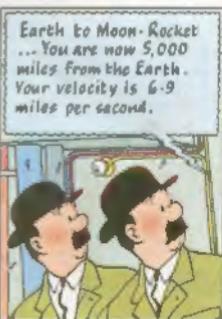


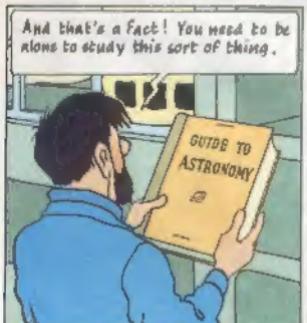
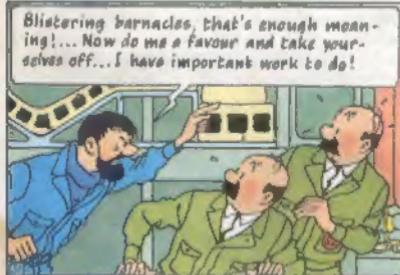
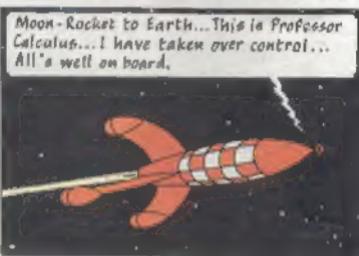
Well, my head's not spinning, anyway! This whole thing is nothing but hocus-pocus and jiggery-pokery! You're just acting the... I mean... You're trying to pull my leg again!



So you doubt my word, eh? Well, you come up with me.





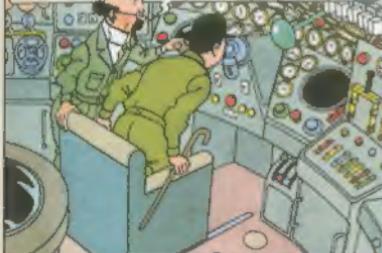


Earth to Moon-Rocket
... You have just attained
a velocity of over 8 miles
per second. You are no
longer subject to normal
gravitational pull.

Now then, here we
go! We'll tackle the
first chapter.



Sit down and watch. Look, there's the Moon
in all her glory!



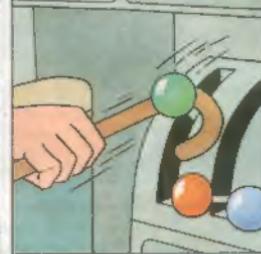
Is that really the Moon? That
funny ball riddled with little
holes?



It's amazing!
Thompson, come
and see this!



Mind out! Your stick's
hooked up! For heaven's
sake don't pull it!...
Help!



At that moment,
down below...

Here's to y-y-you,
up th-th-there!



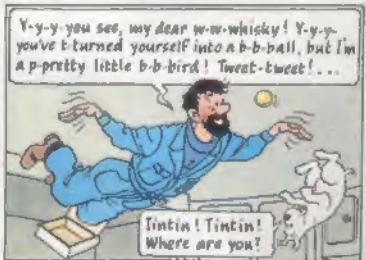
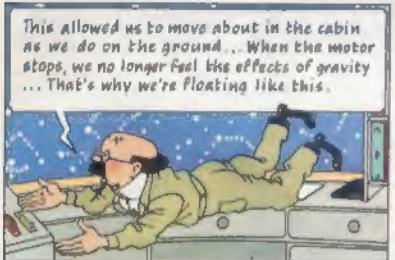
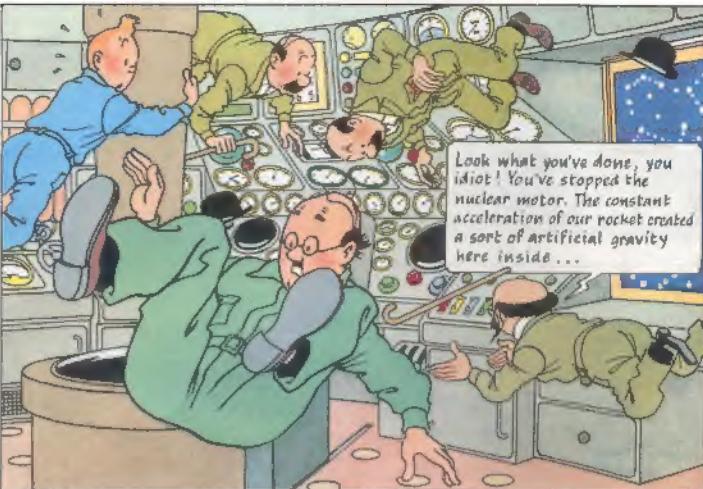
G-g-goodness g-g-gracious!
M-m-my whisky's r-r-rolled
itself into a b-b-ball!...
That's impossible!... Have I
d-d-drunk too m-much already?



W-w-whisky, stop f-f-fooling
about! Get b-b-back in my
glass this m-m-minute!

Too m-m-much or n-n-
not... a decent whisky
d-d-doesn't behave l-l-
like this... C-c-come
here at once!





Earth to Moon-Rocket
... What's going on?
... Why have you stopped the nuclear motor?

Moon-Rocket to Earth... One of the two detectives accidentally closed the motor throttle... But we've just started her up again.

To be on the safe side I'm issuing everyone with magnetic-soled boots...

It's funny, we held on very tight!

Yes, but what to?



The Professor's right. If the nuclear motor stops again for any reason, these soles will hold us down to the cabin floor. Then we shan't float about like balloons.

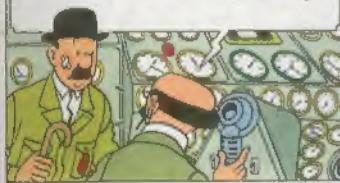


Unless I'm dreaming, there's Adonis!

Who's Adonis? A friend of yours living near here?



The asteroid Adonis is a dwarf planet which orbits between Mars and Jupiter. It is a rock-like mass, about a mile in diameter... Take my place and watch, while I put on my boots... but for goodness sake don't touch anything!



There, that's that... But how do you account for one pair left over?... Has someone not put on his boots?



Hello, Snowy boy, Did you get very bumped about?

So there you are Tintin!... If only you knew what happened!



And the Captain?... Where's the Captain?... Hello, what's that piece of paper, there on the table?



Great snakes! It's fantastic!... He's gone out of his mind!... Quick, the Professor must see this...



Goodness! How lucky we put these boots on. The motor's stopped again... What's the matter this time?



RRRRING RRRRING

You see, Tintin? It's begun again!

Moon-Rocket to Earth... For some unknown reason the outer door has just opened. The nuclear motor stopped automatically. I'm going to see why...

Here's the answer!... Read this note I just found on the table, on the deck below...



"I'm fed up with your rotten rocket! I'm going home to Marlinspike." Signed: Haddock. ... Goodness gracious, then it was he who... Has he gone mad?



Mad? No, I think he's just soaked himself in whisky. In any case, we must look for him. If you agree, I'll put on my space-suit and go out myself...

Of course.

A few minutes later...

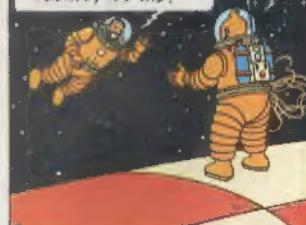
Moon-Rocket to Earth... The Captain has suddenly taken it into his head to jump out of the rocket... Tintin has gone out as well, to try and help him.

Ah, there he is.



Hello Captain! Hello!... Can you hear me?

Cuckoo, it's me!



Of course I c-c-can hear you... Can you hear m-m-me?... Tweet-tweet... Tweet-tweet... You see: I've turned into a little chaffinch...



Hello, Professor... Tintin calling. I can see the Captain. He's floating about ten yards from the rocket, going at the same speed as ourselves. I'll do all I possibly can to get him back on board.



Me b-b-back on b-b-board your beatty flying cigar? N-n-never in my life! I'm off h-h-home to Marlinspike!



But it is!... He's getting further away from the rocket!



Poor Captain!... Now I see: he's being pulled into orbit by Adonis!... He's lost!



Hello Professor Calculus... Tintin calling... The Captain's getting further and further away... attracted by Adonis.

Getting further away? ... That's only to be expected... He's become a satellite of Adonis!

This is terrible!... Surely there must be something we can do?

Of course... We must inform Earth at once, and tell them Adonis has a new satellite by the name of Haddock!

Not so fast! I have a plan: you raise the retractable ladder at once, so that I can anchor myself securely. Then, start up the motor gently at first, but getting faster and faster...

But what are you hoping to do?

To get close enough to the Captain to throw him a line, and pull him aboard.

Pull me aboard? ... Not on your life!

It's sheer madness!... But I admire you for wanting to try... I'll raise the retractable ladder as you said, and wait for your orders...

Tintin here... I'm securely anchored... You can start the motor...

All right... I... Tintin, it's terribly risky... But, good luck, anyway! Steady now: I'm starting the motor...



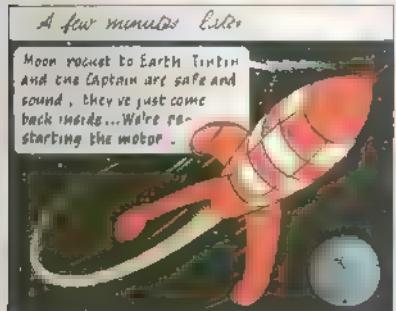
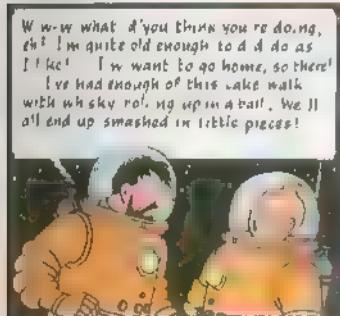
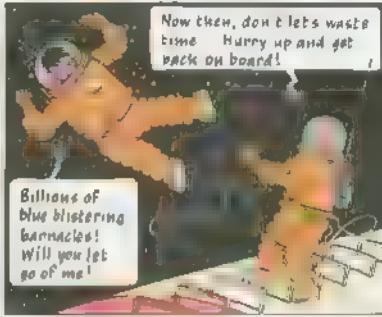
Tintin calling... I got a terrific jolt but I managed to hold on... You are right on course...

Yes, I can see the Captain... I'll close up to him. But for goodness' sake be quick. As soon as the motor stops Adonis will start dragging us into orbit.

I'll do my best... Steady now! Stand by to cut the motor!









For the time being, until your medicine takes effect I'll cut this shock of hair for you. But first let's go below, it will be easier down there.

Here, give me the scissors I'll shear these mer-no lambs myself!

Oh? As you please...

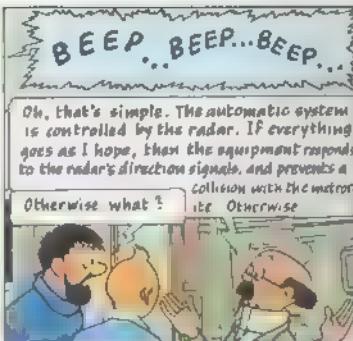
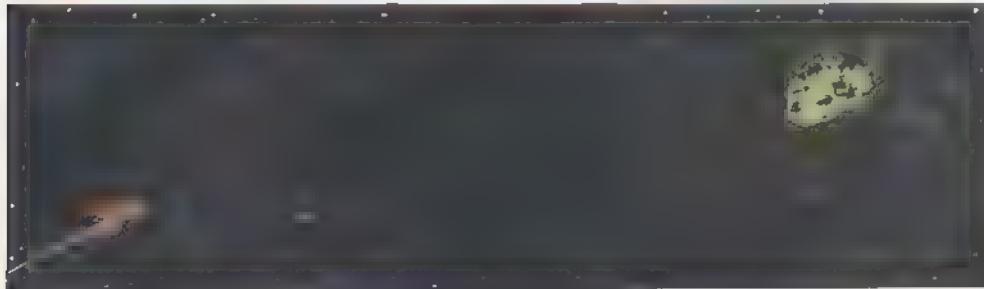
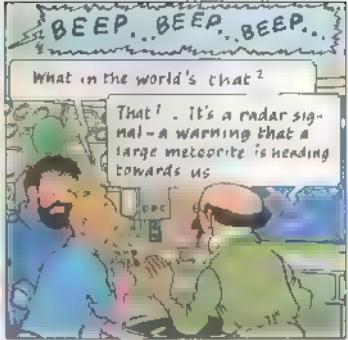
Earth to Moon-Rocket... Attention! Attention! ...

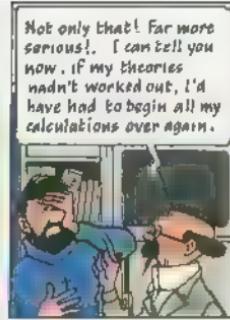
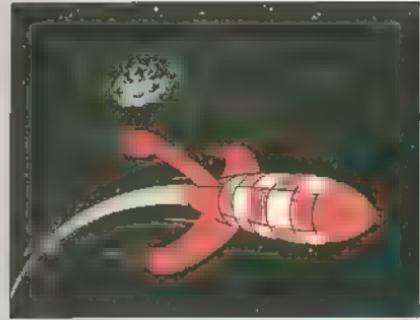
Earth to Moon-Rocket: Stand by. The turning operation will have to be made in twenty minutes' time.

Right. We're waiting for your instructions.

So now we're going to turn round... What's this latest acrobatic? Why not loop-the-loop, or do a roll, or go into a spin, thundering typhoonie?!

Wait, I'll explain to you...







Of course, but like a missile. Travelling as we are, at such a terrific speed, we would crash on the Moon, and that would be the end of us all.. Is that really what you want?



Listen!.. There's only one thing I want, blistering bar-nacles! To be able to breathe God's good air, instead of air out of a tin! And to smoke my pipe! That's all I want!



Good! Now, what do we do to prevent ourselves crashing on the Moon? . Quite simply, we turn our rocket completely round, nose to tail. To do this, first we cut out the main motor, and start up an engine giving directional thrust... Once the rocket has turned round, the exhaust from our nuclear motor will break our descent. If all goes well, this will allow us to land quite gently on the Moon... You follow me? ..

In fact, if I understand you correctly, it's the same procedure as for launching, but exactly the other way round.



Earth to Moon-Rocket .. Stand by. . Two minutes to go before stopping the main motor



Get ready, everybody . And Captain, unless you want to start flapping about like a butterfly when the motor stops, hurry and put on your magnetic boots.



Oh Columbus! And my boots are down below!.. Quick! I'll put them on

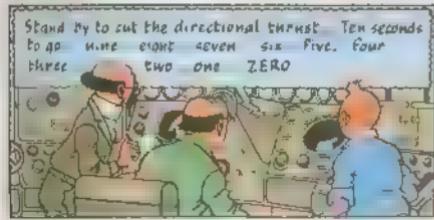


One minute to go





Earth to Moon-Rocket . Stand by to start up the directional thrust ..Ten seconds to go
Nine eight seven.. six five four, three two one.
ZERO



Stand by to start up the directional thrust . Ten seconds to go
Nine eight seven six.. five four three two one. ZERO



I say, bacs, do you really think they'll land on the Moon?

Hal hal! I'm hoping so!... But whether they'll ever come back, that's another story!

I er... don't understand... Why?... Is it...?

Sh! Top secret!... You'll see later... Ah, there's their radio coming in again...

Earth calling.

Earth to Moon-Rocket... This is your present situation... You have another 88,000 miles to go... You are on the estimated course. You are gradually slowing down.

A little later...

Earth to Moon-Rocket... You have only 31,000 miles to go... In 40 minutes' time you should set the automatic pilot to land on the Moon at the selected place...

Moon-Rocket to Earth... Right! We're just going to have a meal now. Then we'll prepare for the Moon-landing



Yes, my friends. If all goes well, in half an hour's time our rocket will come to rest on the Moon, on the spot I have chosen - almost beside the Sea of Nectar... Thank you, Tintin.



The seaside?... Why, that's wonderful! It's ages since we went to the seaside, isn't it, Thompson?

It jolly well is! But I didn't know there was a seaside resort on the Moon. Did you know that, Captain?

Of course!... Everybody knows!... I even heard that they need two Punch and Judy men on the pier. You'd fit the job perfectly!



"Lunar seas" was the ancient name for the dark patches astronomers saw on the Moon. We still use the names, like the Sea of Nectar and the Ocean of Storms. But you won't find a drop of water anywhere there.



The Moon is covered with high-walled depressions called craters. About 90,000 have been counted. Some are only a few hundred yards across. Others, like Baile, measure 150 miles...

Gracious! Craters are hot places inside volcanoes. We'll have to take care that the rocket doesn't fall into one!

Don't worry; most lunar craters aren't live volcanoes. It's just the name given to them. As a matter of fact, we are going to land inside the crater Hipparchus which is about 90 miles across.



No, no, a thousand times no!... I'm not letting that pass!



What on earth's the matter?

This... this man has insulted us, and we demand an apology!

Met... I insulted you... Met!

Yes you sir... Did you or did you not say that they need two Punch-and-Judy men on the pier, and we'd do perfectly for the job?... Isn't that insulting us?

Quite right!... This man has apologised to us, and we demand an insult!

No! you great oaf! You're back to front!

On²... You mean... we've insulted this man and we owe him an apology?

All right I take back what I said. They don't need two Punch-and-Judy men on the pier, so you can't have the job. Does that satisfy you?

Yes, we're satisfied

To be precise we certainly are!

Yes that's all right... quite all right. They don't need two Punch-and-Judy men, so...

My Friends! Calm down, please! Are the first men to land on the Moon going to begin by quarreling?

So we can't have the job... It's simple, isn't it?

Let us not forget that we are in mortal peril! We must keep our heads. Let us be friends and restrain our tempers. Come gentlemen, make it up now. Then everyone must go to his bunk.

Everyone to his bunk!... But Professor, there are six of us, and only four bunks. Naturally I can give up mine to one of our friends here, but...

Certainly not!

Your place is at the radio: you must keep in touch with the Earth for as long as possible! I look after these two.

There are two spare mattresses spread them out on the floor and lie down.

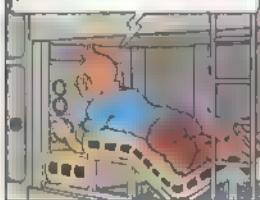
It's kind of you, but we aren't sleepy.

Sleepy or not, I say you're to lie down! That's an order d'you hear? An order!

It's time I went to help you, off make final preparations for the Moon-landing.

Earth to Moon-Rocket... Stand by... Stand by... You are only 3,750 miles from the Moon

Moon-Rocket to Earth... Right... We are making final preparations. The professor is now setting the automatic pilot.



Another seven points East... No, that's too much. One point West, WOLFF. There that's it! The rocket is now heading eight for the centre of the crater Hipparchus



Here, Snowy!



You see, you'll feel much



... better here while the rocket... I say! What do you think you're doing?

Bl stinking barnacles! You don't have to sleep, you prize purple jelly fishes! You were told to lie down. That's all! So jump to it!



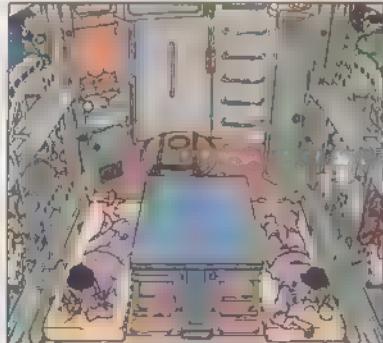
And get a move on, you dunder-headed Ethelred! If the Professor catches you still around, he'll probably maroon you on an empty planet. Look, here he comes now



Ah, everybody lying down? That's good. You must come now WOLFF



Moon-Rocket to Earth
All's well! We are ready
The automatic pilot is set towards the middle of the crater Hipparchus
We're all lying on our bunks, waiting.



Moon-Rocket to Earth
The nuclear motor has just stopped, and the auxiliary engine has taken over.

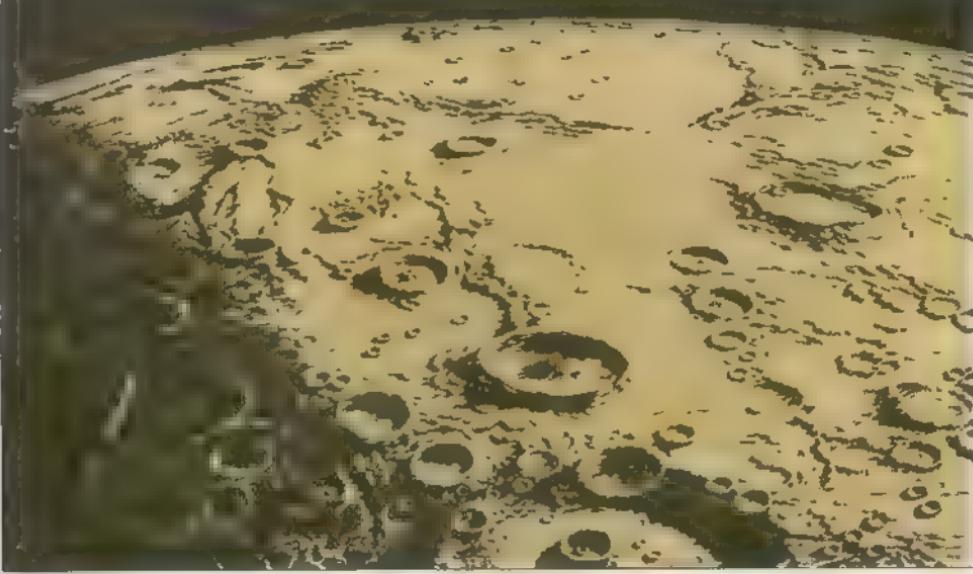


It's amazing! It's tremendous... It's incredible! Just think in a few minutes time, either we'll be walking on the Moon, or we'll all be dead. It's

...!



Moon Rocket to Earth...Tintin calling...We are beginning to feel the effects of slackening speed



The rocket's being shaken by slight vibrations...We are lying flat on our bunks...It's an effort to make the least movement



Our ears are ringing. The vibrations are getting stronger and stronger. The crushing sensation is worse. It's getting... difficult to breathe



We're being crushed into our bunks, by an intolerable weight. I can't move now. The Professor blacked out. I think... I think



My head... well... burst! My eyes... I'm sure they'll pop out of their sockets. My heart... On my heart.



He lo... The Cap... the Captain...
blacked out too... Ooh, this is
agony. The the rocket shaking
in every rivet. Let's hope...
Let's... hope... It won't... Oooh!

.....errr...
Pttt...
errr

That's all... Nothing
more!... Poor Tintin must
have blacked out as we!
...Oh, this silence is
unbearable!

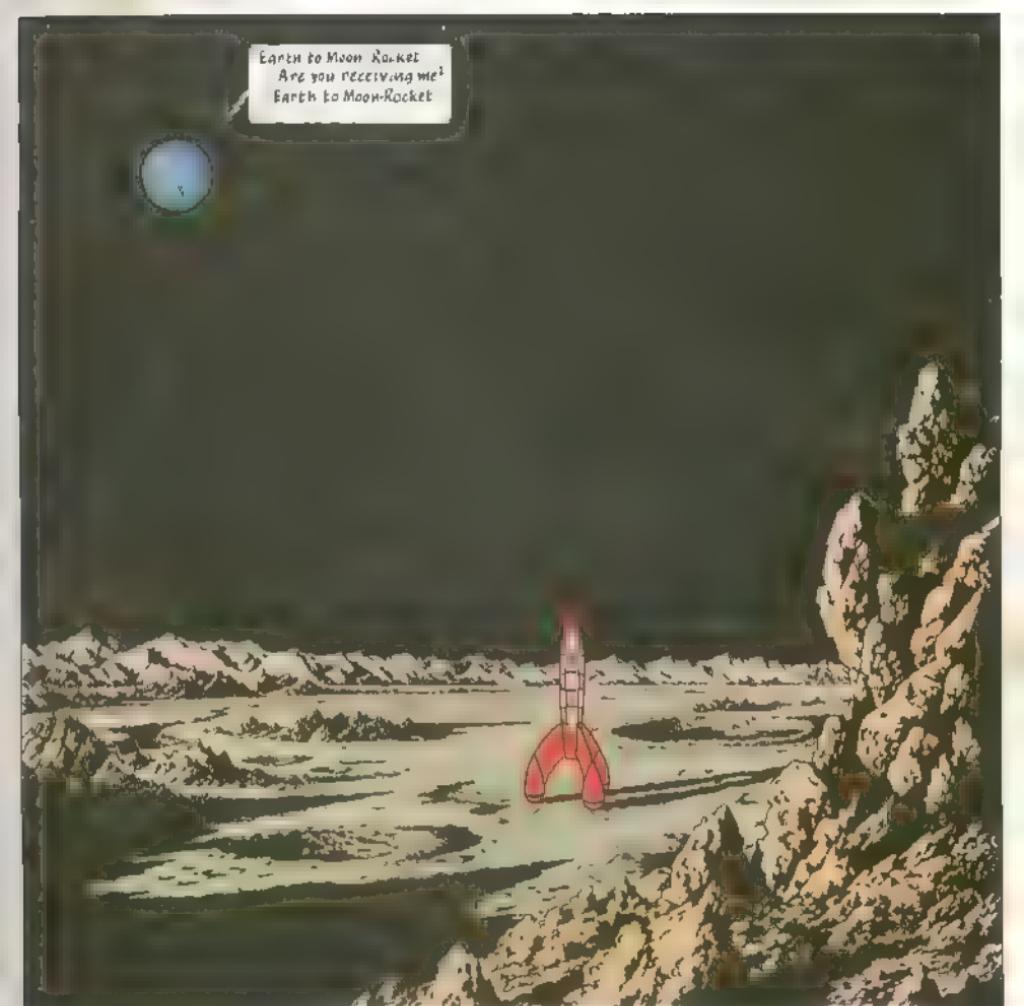
WOOOWOWOWOW!!

WOOOWOWOWOW!!!

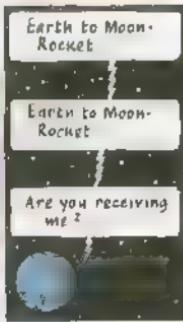


That was the dog howling for the dead!
Then he must have passed out too.





Earth to Moon Rocket
Are you receiving me?
Earth to Moon-Rocket



Something must be wrong.. We've been calling them for more than half an hour, and still no answer ... Try again...



Moon-Rocket to Earth Moon Rocket to Earth... Receiving you loud and clear ...

They're alive! They're alive!

Ho-ho-ho!



This is Cuthbert Calculus speaking to you from the Moon!!.. Success!!.. Success!!.. We're all safe and sound... We couldn't get through to you before; the radio was damaged. It must have been the vibrations that shook the rocket.. Hello Earth.. Did you get that?



Message received. But it sounds as if the vibrations haven't stopped yet. We can hear strange rumbling no set



I er It's nothing don't worry. You can hear er the two detectives snoring! They haven't woken up yet

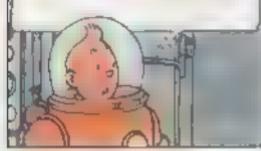
zzzz



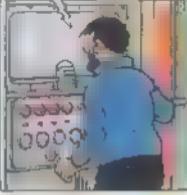
Now we are going to embark from the rocket. The honour has fallen to the youngest among us. We have chosen Tintin to be the first human being to set foot on the Moon... He's just gone down to put on his equipment. He'll give you a direct account of his first impressions, so I'll hand you over to him. That's all for now



This is Tintin speaking. I've just put on my space suit and am now standing in the airlock. They're just going to reduce the pressure to a vacuum inside here. Captain Haddock is in charge. I'm waiting for his final instructions.



Captain Haddock speaking. Pressure zero. Retractable ladder in position... Are you ready? Stand by! I'm opening the door.



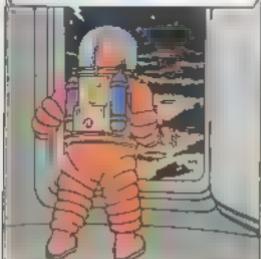
It's a solemn moment. The outside door is swinging slowly on its hinge and...



OOOOOOH!...



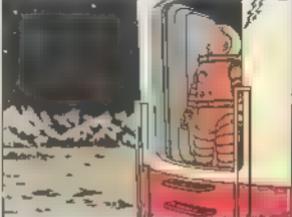
Door! What a fantastic sight



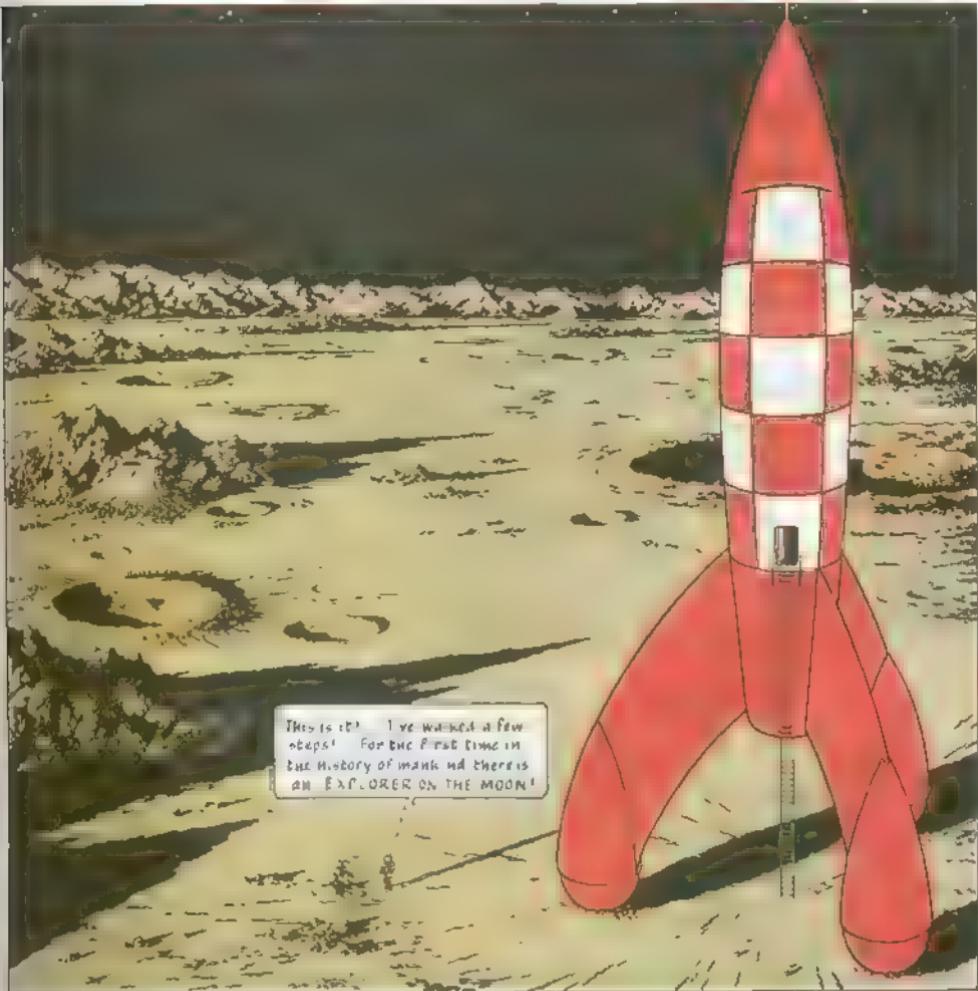
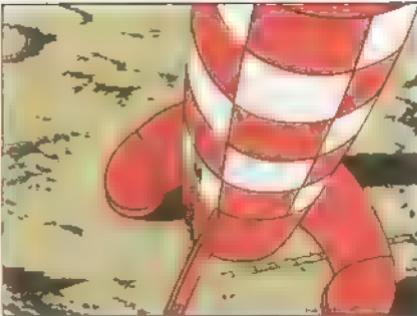
It's... How can I describe it? It's a nightmare land, a place of death, horrifying in its desolation. Not a tree, not a flower, not a blade of grass... Not a bird, not a sound, not a cloud. In the inky black sky there are thousands of stars...



but they are motionless, frozen they don't twinkle in the way that makes them look so alive to us on Earth



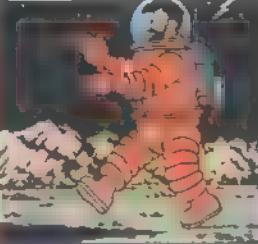
Now I'm descending the ladder which runs down the side of the rocket



But already I'm not alone... There's the Captain coming to join me.



On the Moon It's terrific! I'm walking on the Moon! I'm walking running jumping!



Good heavens, what a leap!



Ha! Ha! Ha! You see, Captain! On the Moon, gravity is actually six times less than on the Earth



There! Look at the Earth!.. Our good old Earth. It looks four times bigger than the Moon does, when we see it at home

Let's hope we'll be able to get back there one day!



Hello Tintin. Here's Snowy coming to join you. I'll follow him down

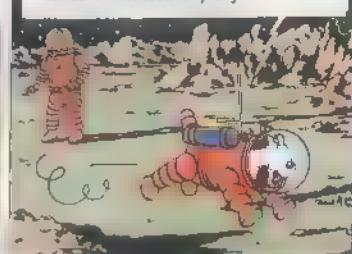


WOOAAAH!

You see. There was no need to get so excited



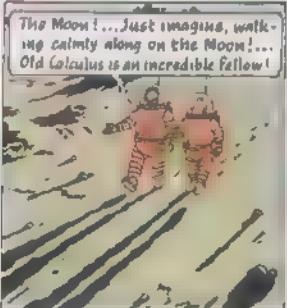
Anyway, I'm not sorry to have a chance to stretch my legs!



voily! now I've taken off like a dragon-fly!



The Moon!...just imagine, walking calmly along on the Moon!... Old Calculus is an incredible fellow!



?



What happened?... Was that an earthquake?

A Moon-quake, more likely, but...

Great snakes! Look there!

Thundering typhoons! What in the world's that?

A meteorite! Look a meteorite! It's just fallen on the exact spot where we were a moment ago... and exploded!

Exploded? But I didn't hear a sound!



Naturally not. There's no air on the Moon, so there's no noise... And that's why the meteorite came down intact, too. Back at home, on the Earth, the friction of the atmosphere would have made it white hot. So it would have disintegrated before reaching the ground, making what we generally call a "shooting star."



Anyway, if those tycoons on the lunar development corporation imagine that this sort of welcome will attract tourists to the Moon, they'll have to think again.



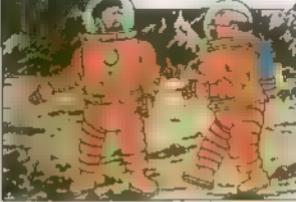
Ah, hello my friends! This is incredible! It's fantastic!... We're on the Moon! Do you realize that?

Oh, so there you are!



Just take a look there!... A little bit closer, and you'd have been able to throw away our return tickets!

A meteorite! How marvelous!



Oh, so you think that's marvelous, do you? When we'd have been as flat as pancakes!

What do you expect? It's an occupational hazard!



Exactly, blistering barnacles! But this isn't my occupation! Thundering typhoons, I'm a sailor!... And on board ship, at least you don't run the risk of bits of sky falling down all over the place every time you bat an eyelid!

Maybe! But just try coming to the Moon by boat!



Still, that's not the point. We must set to work. Come along and unload the cargo. We must start at once. Wolff has already got everything prepared.



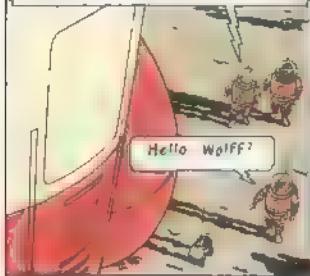
But I wonder what he's waiting for. Hello, Wolff... This is Calculus calling. Can you hear me, Wolff? Hello?



Good heavens, what's happening!... The ladder... The door... Captain, look!



The ladder's retracted! . The door is shut! . What in the world does this mean?

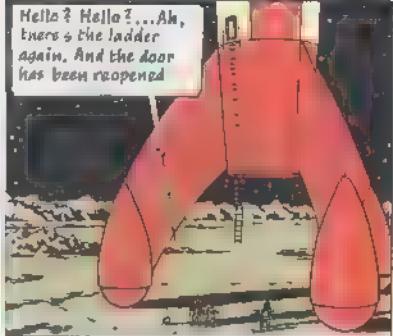


Hello Wolff?

Hello, Wolff, hello? Blistering barnacles, what are you playing at up there? Hello, hello! .. Hello Wolff? Thundering typhoon, are you going to answer me?



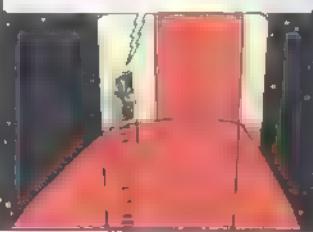
Hello? Hello?... Ah, there's the ladder again. And the door has been reopened



You certainly gave us a fright, Wolff! .. We thought for a moment that the rocket was suddenly going to take off and return to Earth, leaving us stuck here in this delightful place!



I'm terribly sorry...! ... Just a mistake... So stupid... I wasn't thinking



Never mind, forget about it! ... Now Wolff, we're going to discharge the cargo. The Captain's coming up to help you get the crates out of the holds. Tintin and I will stay down here.

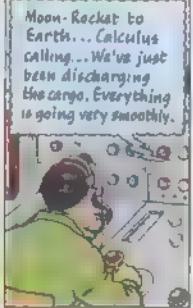


It's quite a simple job. Each crate is bound with steel wires connected to a central ring. You only have to slip the ring over the hook on the pulley-block

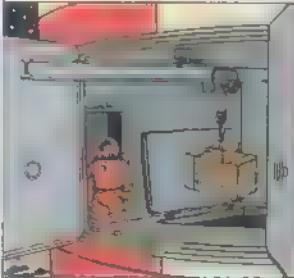


Right! ... I'll go up and join Wolff.

Moon-Rocket to Earth... Calculus calling... We've just been discharging the cargo. Everything is going very smoothly.



The hours go by.



There... As far as the cargo's concerned, we'll soon have finished. But we've still got to unload the reconnaissance tank



Hello, Captain! Next one please.

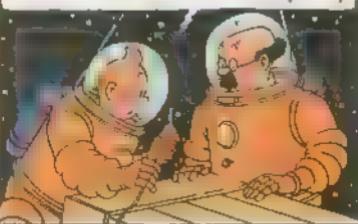




Billions of blue blistering bar-macles! I'd thank Tintin if I were you. Without him you'd have been smashed to pulp!

Look, Professor. Was I wrong to push you over?

The wires have parted. Just look there, they've been worn through by friction. It must have been caused by the vibrations to the rocket towards the end of the journey.



We certainly had a bit of luck! Shall we carry on, Captain? But this time be sure to check the wires.

And how! I'll make doubly sure!

I say, Wolff, we're going to carry on... By Christopher, Wolff, what's the matter?

...I don't know... I felt dizzy... suddenly... I thought I was going to faint. Perhaps it's my heart... I... it'll go: I feel better already!



Don't worry, Wolff, probably it's only fatigue. And perhaps your oxygen supply is badly adjusted. Go and lie down. In fact, we'll all follow suit.

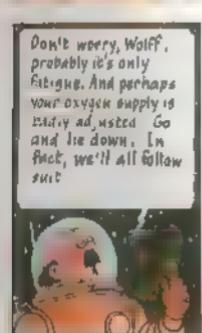
A few minutes later.

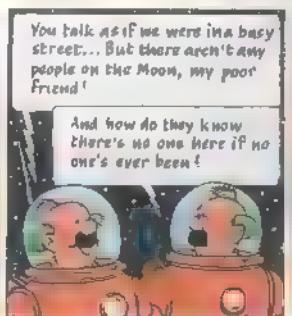
Moon-Rocket to Earth. We've just come back on board for a bit of a rest. Meanwhile the two Detectives have gone out to have a turn at exploring.

Imagine! Here we are, strolling on the surface of the Moon, where the hand of man has never set foot!

Hm!... Really never?

Stop, my dear fellow! Stop!





Well? You see? What did I tell you?

Footsteps... There's someone else
besides us on the Moon!



Hello, this is Thompson with a 'p' as in
Percival. Calling Moon-Rocket.

Moon-Rocket here
-Calculus speaking.
We are receiving you



Thompson calling. We've made a
sensational discovery. See ya later,
d'you hear? Listen to this. There
are people on the Moon!

What sort of fairy-tale is that?
People? Other people?...
Nonsense!



But there are! We've discovered foot-
steps!

Footsteps? But great sunspots,
they're obviously footsteps
made by one of us.



They can't be made by ONE of us
there are TWO sets of footsteps

Quite right!



Then they're footsteps made by
two of us, Huhuh!... I expect
you've gone back on your tracks,
and those are your own foot-
marks!



Great Scotland Yard! Have we been
so gorm in circles, following our
own tracks-as in the desert?

Definitely not. Because there
are two sets of tracks, and
we're alone!



Alone! You're alone, all right
and class by yourselves you Bash-
bazoos! You come back here and
get a move on! You've only enough
oxygen for another half-hour,
anyway



All right, all right, we're coming.
Since you despise our scientific con-
tributions...



Perhaps it's silly but I wonder. Those
footsteps they saw. What if there are
other men on the Moon? Do you think
that's absolutely impossible?



Impossible! Theoretically, no. If
we were able to get here, then others
could too. But as far as I'm concerned,
I'm certain we are the first - and
the only people - to land on the
Moon



They can say what they
like in there... We'll
see who's right in
the end

Yes, yes.
Patience!



A few minutes later...

Gentlemen, our plan was to stay on the Moon for a whole lunar day - that's equivalent to fourteen terrestrial days. But our oxygen supplies were intended for four people and one dog, and not for six people, which is our present number. So we shall have to restrict our stay to six days.



We must therefore hasten our work. While Wolff and I set up our observational instruments, Tintin and the Captain will unload the components of our reconnaissance tank and assemble it. Is that agreed? Right then, gentlemen, let's get to work!



**EXTRACT FROM THE LOGBOOK
BY PROFESSOR CALCULUS**

3rd June - 2265 hrs. 6 M T., unloading of cargo completed. Wolff and I have started to install the observatory. Actual work at 2230 hrs. Captain Haddock and Tintin have begun assembling the tank.

4th June - 0830 hrs. Operations commenced at 0400 hrs. (# 6 T). Large module, cameras in position. Theodore in working order.

Moon to Earth... Calculus calling. The optical instruments and cameras are ready for use. We are beginning our observational work.



Observe away, my friends. You do that! Your discoveries will be vastly interesting to us! Ha! ha! ha! ha!



**EXTRACT FROM THE LOGBOOK
BY PROFESSOR CALCULUS**

6th June - 2150 hrs. 9 M T. Wolff and I spent the day studying cosmic rays and making astronomical observations. Our findings have been as follows: progressively an upward trend here in Luna II. The Captain and Tintin have recently finished assembling the tank. 3rd June - 2200 hrs. (# 6 T). They are now using the tank and Tintin announced the tank ready for use.

Moon to Earth... Calculus calling. The tank's ready. We're going to make the first trials. Tintin will be in charge. He's just entering the turret.



He has just secured the hatch. Now they are filling the insulated cabin with air. When this is done they can remove their space-suits; then Tintin will take the controls and the Captain will act as lookout.



An, there's Tintin's head showing through the multiplex cockpit cover. He's smiling at me and signalling that everything's in order.



And there's the Captain. Like Tintin, he's signalling to us that all's well. He's wearing his head-phones and...



Hello, Haddock calling... Ready for departure... Hello there, Tintin, weigh the anchor!

Good luck

O K
OFF we go!



Bl!ons of blue blistering barnacles, Tintin! Couldn't you cast off more smoothly?



I'm sorry. It's the first time I've driven this sort of machine.

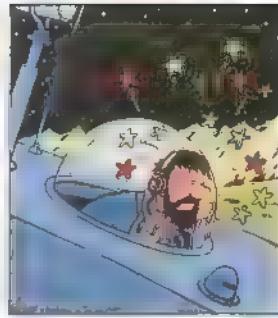


Hey, Tintin! This is a tank you're driving, not a thundering motor-scooter!... We're on the Moon, you know, not in a Fun Fair!

I'm doing my best, but...



But don't you think I've learnt a lot already?



steady! Hang on tight!



Tintin's calling. Apart from the bumps, everything's fine.



Stop, Tintin, for heaven's sake! Stop! This is agonising. My microphone's bust. Tintin can't hear me!



You won't catch me being a regular passenger in your blistering taxi!



HELP!



Great snake! A crevasse! Stop!



Crumbs! That was a near thing! A few more inches and we'd have plunked into that chasm!



Blistering barnacles, it's a mere detail that I cracked my head against that cover again! But we've had enough! We're going home! We know now that the tank goes well.. and that crash helmets are indispensable!

I agree. I'll reverse, and we'll go back to Base.



EXTRACT FROM THE LOG BOOK
BY PROFESSOR CALCULUS

6th June - 1340 hrs. (9.46 J.)
This is a day that will go down in the annals of science. We have succeeded in making direct measurement of the constant of solar radiation, and facing exactly the limits of the solar spectrum in the ultra-violet an hour ago, at 1235 precisely 400ft. the Captain, Juniper and myself set off on a reconnaissance trip in the tank, Edwards the crab, Ptolemy,



Tank calling Base. All's going well on board.



Wow! It's hot under this flower pot! I'm positively melting!



Ah... [It's much better without the helmet and microphone, and all that paraphernalia.



I say... What's that I can see over there?



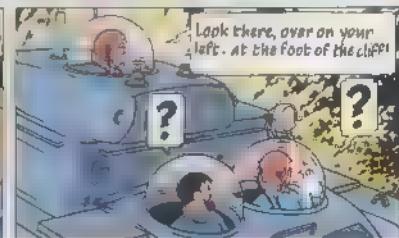
STOP!



Right. I'm drawing up.



Look there, over on your left. At the foot of the cliff!



See down there, behind that finger of rock .

It looks like the entrance to a cave

That's just what I thought
We'd better have a closer look
at it.

Right! I'll go across
Are you coming too, Captain?

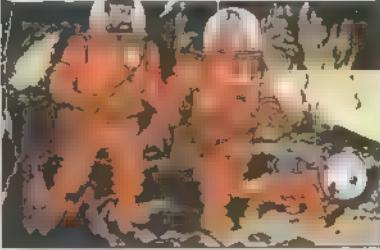
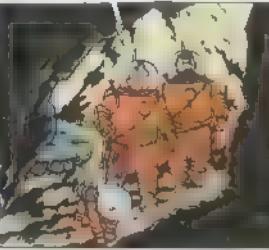
Hello, Wolff... You're quite right! It's
definitely the entrance to a cave.

O.K. I'm
with you

It remains to be seen where it leads
to. Come on! I'll switch on my lamp

Blistering barnacles! I've done a good many
things in my time... but never lunar spelaeology!

We're in a proper cathedral!



Stalagmites and stalactites...
This proves that at some period
there was water on the Moon

Snowy, Snowy, don't go far ahead. Be
careful, and stay close to us

He doesn't seem to
realise that I'm grown
up! Honestly! What does
he take me for! Granny's
little lap-dog!



Quick, Captain Hold tight ! I'll try and shine a light down



The crevasse bends sharply. I can't see far. Snowy ! Snowy !



Quickly, Captain ! Undo your rope and secure it to a rock.



But you aren't really going to...

Yes, yes. We must do all we can to try and save poor Snowy. Hurry. Tie me an absolutely firm knot.

There ... But it's sheer madness ...



Al right ?

For heaven's sake, Tintin, be careful ! You know what it'll mean if you smash your oxygen pipe.



Yes I know

Tintin be sensible : come back ! It's quite useless. You don't really imagine he could have survived a fall like that ? You must come back !

No, I'm going on. Perhaps he's only hurt

Alright

Ah ! I'm standing on a sort of ledge. Snowy ! Snowy !



The crevasse is widening. I'm still going down



Oh ! The rope is too short ! I've come to the end, I can't go down any further.



You see, you donkey. Blistering barnacles, come on up !



You're right. I'll come up ... Snowy ! ... Snowy !



Captain. Captain ! I think I saw something move. I'm letting go of the rope. It can't be far to the bottom



You're crazy ! Tintin, don't do that !



Great snakes ! ... Ice !





Hello, Captain. I've found Snowy! He's safe and sound. But his radio's smashed. I'll climb back up to the rope.



You see? What did I tell you?

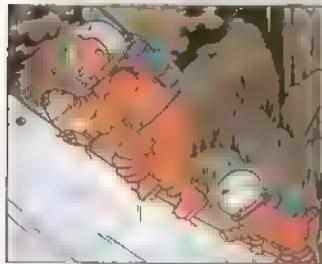
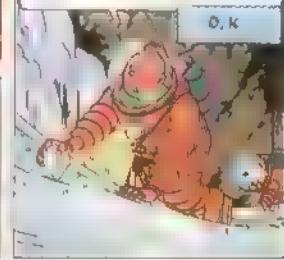
My dear Tintin, you don't imagine you can stand up on this slate rock, do you?



Crumbs! How can I climb this icy slope? There's only one way to do it: by cutting steps with a chunk of rock. Oh well, to work!

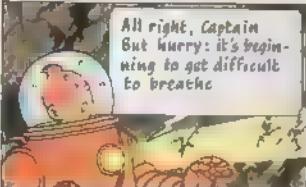
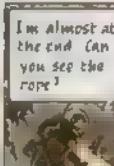
Hello, Captain. Untie the rope and let it down as far as possible. When I manage to reach it I'll tie Snowy on, and you can pull him up. ... Then I'll follow.

O.K.



A few minutes later

Hello Tintin. That's it. Snowy is safe now.



Hello Tintin. I've secured a heavy stone to the end of the rope. I'm letting it down.

I'm almost at the end. Can you see the rope?

No, I can't see it. Do please hurry!

All right, Captain. But hurry: it's beginning to get difficult to breathe.

Bl staring barnacles, what's up? The rope's somehow got shorter than it was just now



Oh! I can't feel the weight of the stone any longer. It must have come off or else it's wedged somewhere. Quick, start again



Meanwhile

Hello, wo FF. Well, what news?



Wolff here. Still no sign. It's more than half an hour since they went into the cave. I'm beginning to wonder if... Ah, there they are!



Heavens! Tintin's staggering—he looks pretty groggy. The Captain's almost carrying him! Hello, Captain, is he hurt?



No. But he's just about reached the end of his tether, poor lad.



Saved! My friends, they're saved!

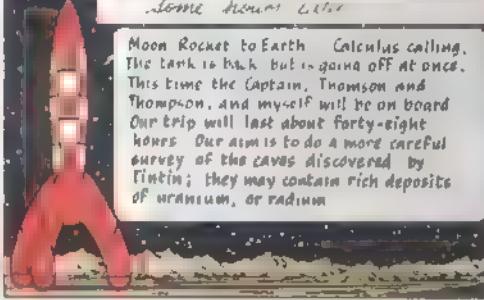


Tank calling Base. The Captain and Tintin are back on board. The Captain's taken over command as Tintin is completely exhausted. We're returning home!



Some hours later

Moon Rocket to Earth. Calculus calling. The tank is back but is going off at once. This time the Captain, Thomson and Thompson, and myself will be on board. Our trip will last about forty-eight hours. Our aim is to do a more careful survey of the caves discovered by Tintin; they may contain rich deposits of uranium, or palladium.

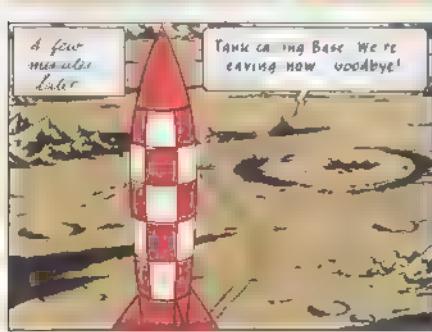


Ah! I have a feeling that Operation Ulysses is entering a decisive phase. We're going to have some fun



A few minutes later

Tank calling Base. We're leaving now. Goodbye!



Moon-Rocket leaving. Tintin here. Good luck and good hunting. And don't leave us long for too long!



Calculus here. Don't worry, Tintin. We'll be back in forty-eight hours

I don't know why, by thunder, but somethin' tells me it would be wiser to turn back!

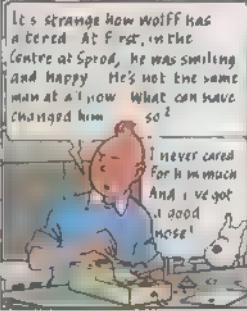


Goodbye! See you soon! I'm going to start mending the radios on our space suits. Goodbye!

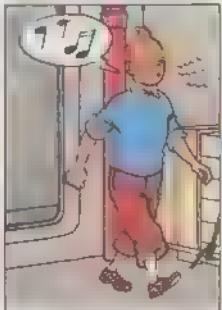


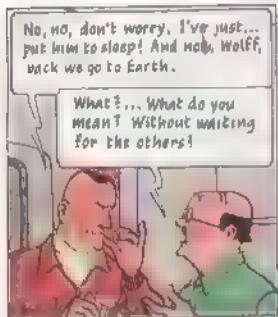
It's time for a meal. I or . . . I'll go down to the stores to find something for lunch.

A good idea, too. I'm dog tired of waiting.



He's going down! It's too late to do anything! . . . Now he's at the bottom. He's going into the hold . . .

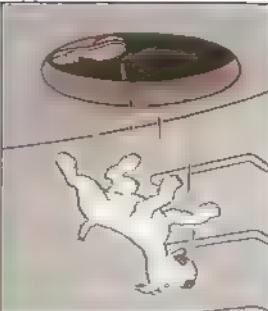




Why... What are you doing? How can that poor animal do you any harm?



You never can tell, Wolff! This wretched mongrel could make trouble for us later on.



Then we set off for the Earth! Ha! ha! ha! I'd like to see their faces when they find the rocket's gone!... Killing!

Is that food coming, Wolff? I'm as hungry as a lion!

In a minute... Not long now...



We've had a breakdown. The motor batteries are flat. A short... rest, I expect. The Captain is just connecting the small emergency batteries, so that we can get back to Base.



By Lucifer! They're coming back! We must take off immediately! Leave your pots and pans, Wolff... We're on our way, at once!

At once? It's impossible. The motor has to be prepared for at least half an hour.

Fool! Couldn't you have remembered that sooner? Well, hurry! What are you waiting for?



Meanwhile

Crumps, what am I doing here!... And... Dash my head!... But what... I'm tied up!! What's happened to me?



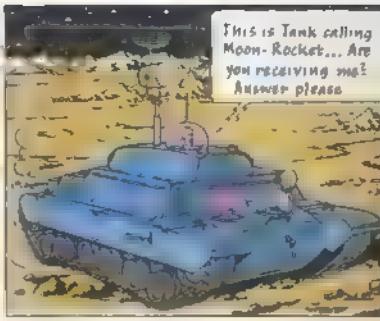
I don't understand at all! Why what's that hum-ming noise? Good heavens! It's the motor... But then... then... the racket's going to take off...

But where are the others? Prisoners line myself! But come to think of it. Poor devils! They went off in the tank... Are they going to be left on the Moon? Wolff! HELP!

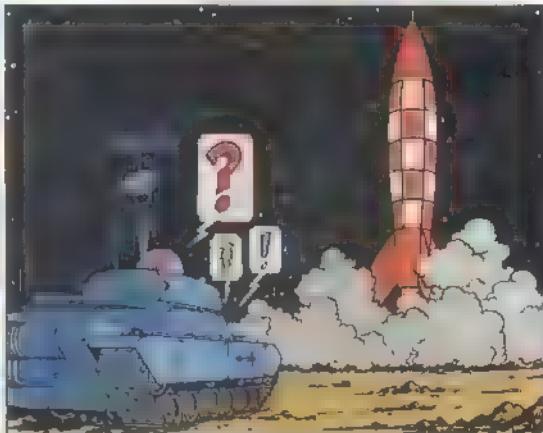
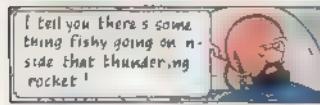


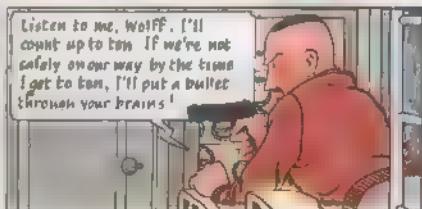
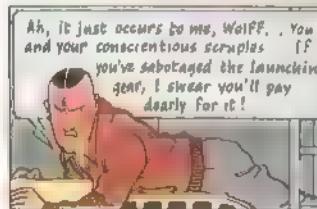
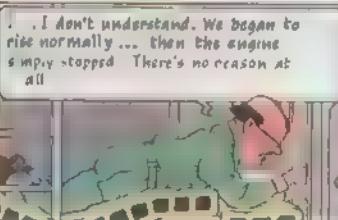
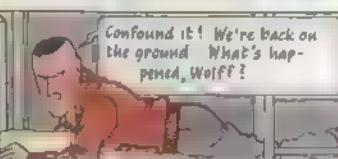
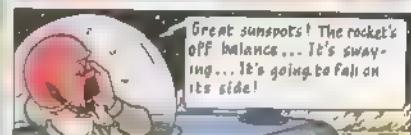
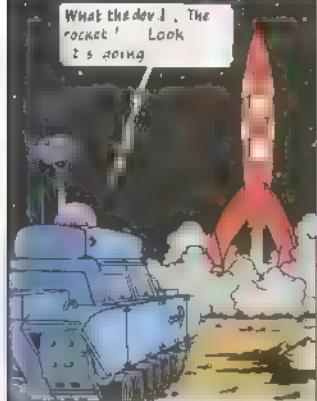
Tank calling Base... We're returning at reduced speed. We can see the rocket. Can you hear me?





No, not yet





And ben! The rocket's not moved. You asked for it, Wolff! I'll fire...



Yes, Moli.. Did I disturb you? I do beg your pardon. I really should have knocked before I came in. Now get up, both of you, and put up your hands!



It's a small world, isn't it Colonel Boris? You haven't changed much since the days when you plotted against your master, the King of Sylvania.



By the way, you accused poor Wolff of having sabotaged the launching gear. I'm sorry to disillusion you. I was the culprit.



Tintin, Tintin, where are you?

Here, Captain, come up quickly!



Billions of blue blistering barnacles! Where did this Jack pudding come from? OFF the Moon!



No, out of the hold, where he was hiding - thanks to the treachery of our friend Wolff. Will you get busy tying them up, while we're waiting for the others?



Ah, there you are at last, Professor Calculus. Do come in. The gentle man is so anxious to make your acquaintance.

Who are you, sir? And what are you doing here?



So you prevented me from smoking my poor little pipe, Wolff, just to let this thundering Bashi Bazouk have his ration of oxygen?

You may as well know at once that it's a waste of time questioning me. I'm not talking! You'd better interrogate Wolff, he'll be only too happy to spill the beans, the wood-louse!



In heaven's name, Wolff, what's the meaning of this? What's going on... I can't make it out... It's all a misunderstanding, isn't it... Come along, Wolff, tell me. Explain yourself.



I'm ashamed. So utterly ashamed...

Tintin! Tintin! Quick!



Quick, quick! I think Snowy's leg's broken -

What? I'm coming at once

I'm afraid you're right! I saw him lying unconscious a few minutes ago. But there was other urgent work to be done. I'll carry him up to the cabin

Well?

Yes his leg's broken

You hear that, you unfeeling monsters? Vivisectionists... Torturers!... Cannibals!

Now then, Snowy boy. Captain Haddock's going to examine you... There... Let's see your paw... Does that hurt? No, not at all, eh?



!?

WOOAAAH



I... or... you see, I have a way with animals... It's one of my strong points. But I wonder if it wouldn't be better...



A few minutes later...

There we are, Snowy. A few days' rest, and you'll be fine.



Now then, back to these gentlemen. We're waiting for your explanation, Wolff.

Yes... I'll tell you everything.

Three years ago I was working in America at the rocket proving ground at White Sands. None of this would have occurred if I'd not had a passion for gambling. I got into debt. Then one day, in New York, a man approached me. He said he knew my situation, and was ready to settle my debts in exchange for a little harmless information.



...about the nuclear research I was engaged on. But little by little he put pressure on me to reveal real secrets. At first, I refused. But my creditors were hounding me. I was trapped... Finally I gave in. A spy - that's what I had become. But one day I rebelled. I wanted to become an honest man again, and I fled to Europe. In the end I came to Sylvania, where I heard they were building an atomic centre. I got a job there.



When you arrived in Sylvania I was happy and had forgotten the whole business. Then one day I received a message. They had picked up my trail; they ordered me to furnish them with complete details of the experimental rocket we were just finishing. Otherwise my past would be revealed. Heartstricken, I surrendered.



So it was you who betrayed all the plans, and all the radio-control data!

It was I; yes, it was I.

Then it was you who nearly stoned my head in, too, when I was lying in wait in the corridor at the Centre. Well, you'll pay for that all right!



One moment, Captain. We too have a question to ask the prisoner.

Yes, a vital question!



What about the skeleton, Wolff? Was that you?

Yes, skeleton, were you the Wolff? Come on, ANSWER UP!

Blistering barnacles, this is a SERIOUS interrogation! In other words, amazeballs, you keep out of it!

Alright, Wolff
Go on

Well, thanks to Tintin, your enemies didn't succeed in capturing the trial rocket you blew up in flight. But they believed that it was I who betrayed them, and they threatened to kill me. Then they learned that this rocket was under construction, and they gave me fresh orders... One of the crates coming from Oberkochen would be faked, and would conceal a journalist. My part would be simply to facilitate his task...

And you believed a Fairy-tale like that? You two-faced traitor! A cock-and-bull story. It would make a cat laugh!

Er... they said he'd reveal his presence once the rocket reached the Moon

Then, soon after our arrival here, I took advantage of your absence to let him out of his hiding place. It was Jorgen. He divulged his real objective: to capture the rocket and take it back, not to Sprudt, but to the country for which he works.

And I trusted you implicitly... Oh! Wolff!

Well, go on

Yes out with it, Judas!

Today, when Tintin was alone on board and the rest of you had departed for forty-eight hours, the Colonel decided to act. At the given moment, Tintin went down into the hold...

That's to say, you'd been first to set your accomplice free. Then you managed to arrange that I'd go down myself.

I believe you. This is what happened then. When I came round I was in the hold, dressed up like a chicken... I heard the humming of the motor, and realised what was going on... Luckily for us, these two worthy characters were never Boy Scouts!

I mean that they don't know how to tie a knot! So I managed to get rid of my ropes without too much difficulty. And none too soon! The engine was just starting. As the rocket was rising, I severed all the leads. The motor stopped immediately, and the rocket fell back to the ground...

And thanks to Tintin we were saved!

Two more points, Wolff... The ladder being retracted... and the crate that nearly squashed us: was that you?

Yeah... And when you were just behind me pretending to have an attack of dizziness, you meant to push me out into space, eh, gangster?

Er... yes. I stayed here, and it was he who knocked out Tintin. It was only afterwards that he told me of his plan to abandon you on the Moon. I tried to stop him... I swear I did!

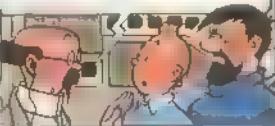
Saved?... Ah, my poor friends, I only hope that you are not rejoicing too soon!

Undoubtedly by cutting the leads Tintin averted disaster... for the time being. Alas, it is only too likely that in falling, the rocket suffered serious damage. And this will probably take time to repair. Meanwhile, there's still the grave problem of the oxygen... But let's hear the rest of your story, Tintin

Where was I?... Oh yes. Once the rocket grounded, I opened the door of the air-lock and lowered the retractable ladder, so that you could get in. Then, having armed myself with a pistol and spanner, I came quietly up to the cabin. I found myself right in the middle of a family squabble

This thug accused Wolff of sabotaging the launching gear, and was going to shoot him. My spanner knocked his gun out of his hand. Just in time, wasn't it, my dear Jorgen... as it seems that you are no longer Colonel Boris

Why, do you know this pithecanthropus?



Oh yes, we met in Syldavia, over that business of King Ottokar's Sceptre. Under the name of Boris, he was aide-de-camp to King Muskar Ali, whom he shamefully betrayed. I won the first round, but for a while he seemed to be winning the second

And now we'll dump these two down in the hold.

What?... While we risk running out of oxygen, we're going to clutter the place up with these pirates? They were going to abandon us on the Moon: well, that's the fate they deserve themselves.

We must be more chivalrous than they were, Captain... Now, you're the expert, so take them below and tie them up securely



Anyway, my little lambs, I'm going to knit you lovely little rope waistcoats to keep you nice and warm. Hand-made, by thunder! Guaranteed absolutely perfect

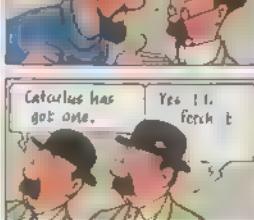
Do what you like with me. But please be kind enough to stop spluttering in my face - it's wet!

What?... Me?... Wet?... Blistering barnacles, you dare a man of spirit like me! To hear myself insulted, by this creature, this Bashi-bazouk!



Calm down? Calm down?... But you heard him, this little black-beetle! Daring to make out that I'm wet! Calm down! I like that, from you!

To call me wet
a marvel!



Catulcus has
got one.

Yes I... fetch it

come now Captain the incident is closed. Go on down to the hold with the two prisoners.

That's right. In the meantime I'll get in touch with the Earth and tell them what's been happening.

Moon-Rocket calling Earth. There have been extremely serious developments here. A traitor in the service of some unknown power, was secretly smuggled aboard the rocket.

WOFF was it a campie? Yes WOFF! Today they went into action and tried to seize control of the rocket. Fortunately we have managed to overpower them, and put a stop to their machinations.

Meanwhile

There! If you succeed in gutting yourselves unalone by steering barnacles, I'll be on the pierce and drink nothing but water for the rest of my days!



A few minutes later.

That's done! Our two CHUMPs are now on the wall.

Good. Now for my news.



I've just made a superficial inspection of the damage to the rocket. My preliminary estimate is that it will take us at least a hundred hours to effect the necessary repairs.



To that must be added the time for our return journey. We have oxygen supplies for a hundred hours at the most which means that having used our last resources to re-launch the rocket, we shall run the risk of arriving on Earth as corpses.



Perhaps! But meanwhile we're still very much alive. And we'll start work at once. At all costs we must get everything finished in the shortest possible time!



Moon Rocket to Earth. We're going to begin the repair work. Give us some music. It will keep up our morale.



Come on, come on, cry-babies! To work! And none of those gloomy thoughts. We're going to have some music. Thundering typhoons, there's nothing like a bit of music to cheer you up!



This is Radio-Know. Our programme continues with "The Gravedigger" by Schubert.



The time passes slowly, the lunar night falls on the isolated rocket.



Seventy-two hours have gone by

Moon-Rocket to Earth .. The work is well ahead. Barring accidents, we shall have finished by midday ... However, we are having to abandon the tank and the optical instruments on the Moon. To dismantle them and then reload them would take too long, in view of the little oxygen remaining

We are only keeping the recording instruments, the cameras, and, of course, the oxygen cylinders from the tank. They constitute our final reserves. Tintin and the Captain have gone to collect them. I'm switching over now, as I want to keep in touch with them.

Right

Hello Tintin! Calculus here.. How are you getting on?

All right, thanks. But the sun has completely vanished. Only the mountain-tops are still glowing on the horizon

But it's not preventing us from seeing, as there's a wonderful light from the Earth

Pom Pom Pom J And they danced J by the J light of J the Earth J

We have left a message sealed inside the tank for those who may one day follow in our steps. If we are lost with all hands, this message will be a reminder of the fantastic adventures of the First men on the Moon. Now we are coming back on board

A few minutes later ..

Everything's in order, Professor

Good. Well, I've finished all the repairs. Earth have just given me the result of their reckoning. Take-off should be at 1652 hours. So we have about two hours to go.

I advise you to lie down, to save oxygen. But before doing that, Captain, would you go to the hold and make the prisoners lie down as well, so that they won't suffer too much.

What?? And would you like me to take them breakfast in bed?

Keeping them is crazy enough. But to cuddle them like babes in arms .. blistering barnacles, that's the limit! Still, I'll go

Two hours later

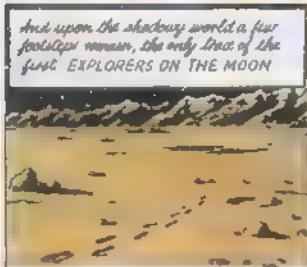
Earth calling Moon Rocket... Stand by Stand by

Thirty seconds to go... Twenty seconds to go... Ten seconds to go .. nine.. eight.. seven six.. five.. four three two one..

ZERO!

Pat once! I've not struck my last blow yet! But ssh! Someone's coming ..

I press the button.. and pray that everything works properly! Otherwise, we're condemned to death!



They're on their way! The only thing that matters now is that they should have enough oxygen. But whatever happens, everything must be prepared for landing.



Is that the landing site? Giovanni?... Baxter here... If all goes well, the rocket will be here later today. Make sure everything's ready for their arrival; fire engines, ambulances... And get some electric saws ready, too, in case they haven't the strength to open the doors themselves. That's all for the moment.



I say, Mr Baxter, there's something wrong! Look; the rocket is deviating from the correct line of flight. I wonder what's happening...



By Jupiter! You're right! Perhaps the steering gear was damaged by the fall... Or else their gyroscopes have been put out of order... It's imperative that they correct their course... Call them, Walter!



This is Earth calling Moon-Rocket. Earth calling Moon-Rocket... Are you receiving me?



No reply... And they're getting further and further away! The poor devils! They're going to their death!



Earth calling Moon-Rocket... Are you receiving me?



Earth calling Moon-Rocket... Are you receiving me?... Earth calling Moon-Rocket



Earth calling Moon Rocket.



Oh, the poor devils! ... So much oxygen, simply being wasted... Heaven knows, they have little enough to play with...

Ssh! They're answer me!

Moon-Rocket to Earth... This is Tintin calling... I have just regained consciousness



Earth to Moon-Rocket, correct your line of flight at once! you are completely off course.

Right!



Quonly, Professor. Hurry! Come to the control cabin! We are off course!



I say! Where are you rushing off to like that?

Hi! Wait for me! I'm coming! What's happening?



Goodness gracious! This is a disastrous! We're heading towards Jupiter!



Earth to Moon-Rocket... well done! You're doing fine now



And now that traitor Wolff isn't here to be such a kill joy, we'll just cheer ourselves up. Let's have a drink all round... Tintin!... Professor?

By the way, where have the two detectives gone?



Moon Rocket to Earth... The steering gear was jammed... We are getting back on the right course



I'm just in time to bring you news of them!



Come on, hands up! ... That's right... The boot's on the other foot now, isn't it, gentlemen?! Congratulations, you have two brilliant colleagues behind those moustaches!



Hah hah!... When they came to check on our ropes, they decided that handcuffs would be more secure!.. And I'm ready to bet they won't get them undone in a hurry!



But that's enough talk! Gentlemen you know the position. There isn't enough oxygen to go round. There are too many of us here. You spared my life, but I'm not going to spare yours!



But but you gave me your word that they would come to no harm

And you were silly enough to believe me! Out of my way let me finish them off!



No, Jorgen, no!.. You shall not do it! Never!

What's got into you? Let go of me!



Will you get out! Let go! Let go of that, you fool!

Hold it in, Wolff!



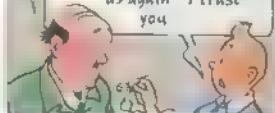
BANG!

Moon-Rocket to Earth... Calculus here I... It's terrible. Jorgen managed to free himself... He wanted to kill us, and Wolff intervened. There was a fight. Jorgen had a gun in his hand and in the struggle it went off. Jorgen was shot right through the heart.



I... I didn't mean to... He did it himself...

I know Wolff. You needn't blame yourself for what has just happened. Here are your glasses. Come and take your place among us again. I trust you



What!! This interplanetary pirate! This freak-water-spaceman! Let him go free! Then, at the first opportunity this snake can stab us in the back! Into the hold with him, blistering barrels! Into the hold, and in irons!



But I... what's what's the matter w tn me?



I understand; carbon dioxide is accumulating...and when you work yourself up...

He's right, Captain. Do please keep calm!



You do as you like! But on your own head be it if we have trouble from this scorpion, Wolff! I disclaim all responsibility!



Don't worry, nothing will happen. I'll answer for him. Now, it will be better to lie on our bunks - in that way we'll save oxygen



But first of all we must go and release the two detectives... And what shall we do about Jorgen's body?

The only answer is to leave it in space.



A few minutes later...

Earth to Moon-Rocket. Here is your latest position. You are now 31,000 miles from your point of departure... How are things going on board?



Moon Rocket to Earth. The carbon dioxide is getting worse and worse. It's hard to breathe now - but at 11, for the moment things are bearable.



The others are dozing on their bunks. I'm having to struggle to keep myself from falling asleep.



Earth to Moon-Rocket... Don't struggle, Tim. Go to sleep. We'll wake you up when it's time for the turning operation



Good-bye.

I think the coast is clear now. Everybody's asleep. This is my chance.



Let's hope no one wakes up!

No, all's well



Where are you going, Wolff?

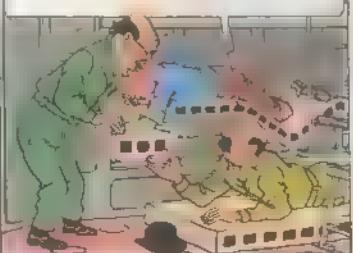


Ssh! Not so loud... I'm going below, to the hold to... er... I think there's another cylinder of oxygen down there.



OK, good

I had to ask, you see. The Captain particularly told me to give him details of every single move you made.



It's incredible. He hasn't given the alarm. Fate is on my side: I shall succeed!



Half an hour later...

Earth calling Moon-Rocket... Can you hear me?... Earth calling Moon-Rocket... Can you hear me?



Can you hear me? MOON-ROCKET!

What? What's that? Oh yes, the radio



Moon Rocket to Earth Tintin here

Ah you real scared us!



Stand by... You have a quarter of an hour to go before the turning operation.

Right. We'll get ready. I'll wake up the others.



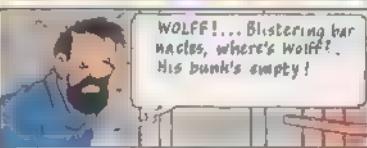
Wake up... Everybody on the alert! Put on your magnetico-soled boots! In a quarter of an hour we have to turn the rocket round



Ugh! More of those confounded acrobatics! I was just dreaming that I was by my fireside at Marlinspike eat on my knee... and



with my instead



WOLFF!... Blistering baraclos, where's Wolff? His bunk's empty!

Don't worry, Captain, I know where Wolff is... He went down to the hold a few min-

utes ago.



And you let him go, you nitwitted nine pin, you!... Even when I'd told you to keep an eye on him?

I did keep an eye on him; he told me himself he was going to the hold



And you were so keen to play the big-hearted hero!... Heaven knows what treachery that wolf in sheep clothing is cooking up for us!



Down to the hold, quick! It may not be too late!



What sitting ducks we'll make if our friend decides to have a little target-practice!



Now, where's he hiding, the gangster!



Thousands of thundering typhoons! There!... What did I tell you?... Look!



The brute! The cannibal! He's sabotaged the .. the things...er...the doings... I mean, the whatnots!



Great snakes! The poor, poor wretch!... This is horrible!



But the time you read this I shall have left the rocket. When I am gone, I hope you will have enough oxygen to reach earth alive. Perhaps by some miracle I shall escape too. Fortune me for the harm I have done you — Wofft

What! It can't be true! If he'd opened the outer door the motor would have stopped.

Wait, there's some more



P.S.
To open the outer door without sounding the alarm and stopping the motors, I had to cut a few wires. You only need to reconnect them, and everything will work properly again.

W

Ten thousand thundering typhoons! He has gone out into space to save our lives! .. And I accused him..

Yes, Captain. But even so, perhaps his sacrifice will be in vain. You go on up, I'll just repair these wires..



Ah, there you are. Well, have you caught that thug Wofft?



WHAT? What do you say! Wofft a thug? If ever I hear you say one disrespectful thing about that hero, I'll throw you into space to join him! You understand, you iconoclast, you?



At that moment

Earth to Moon Rocket, stand by. Ten minutes to go before the turning operation.

Riант



A quarter of an hour later.

Earth to Moon Rocket... Turning operation successfully accomplished. Don't give in! In less than two hours you will be back on the Earth



Yes! And they'll give us an impressive memorial I can see it from here! To Captain Haddock, a martyr in the cause of Science, etcetera, etcetera!



Well, if I have to die, then at least let it be in the way I choose blistering barnacles



Captain! What are you going to do?

What am I going to do? Thundering typhoons, I'm going to empty this bottle of whisky! Alcohol is a poison that kills slowly, they say... As slowly as it likes...



That's enough, Captain! Go and lie down. This is no time to get drunk!

Blistering barnacles, why not? Was I or was I not told that the spirits on board were reserved for an emergency? Well, wasn't I?



...so as far as I am concerned! It can take its time. I'm in no hurry!



It's a thousand to one that we're going to end up as a crate of kippers! Ten thousand thundering typhoons, isn't that an emergency??!



Captain, I would remind you that drunkenness on the public highway is against the law.

Go and lie down!



You... you two... eek-ectoplasms!... They needed two P-P-Punch-and Judy men on the p-p-pier... You -you sh- sh should have stayed there



This time we demand an apology!



Yes, we apologize on demand!



F-F four to one... I give... give up



Half an hour later.

Moon-Rocket to Earth... The air's becoming unbreathable. The last cylinder from the space-suit has been used up... The others are already unconscious. I wonder if we can possibly get back alive.



This is Baxter... Hang on, Tintin! You have only about fifty thousand miles to go... just about another hour. Courage, Tintin! Don't lose heart!... All will be well!



Thanks... Mr Baxter... I'll do my best... to hold on till the end... but I... I...



I'm afraid I... I... shan't have the strength... Goodbye! Goodbye!



Goodbye! Yes, it's goodbye! May you all perish up there! Jorgen and Woff bungled their work. We shall not get your accursed rocket... Well, may you go to the devil in it!

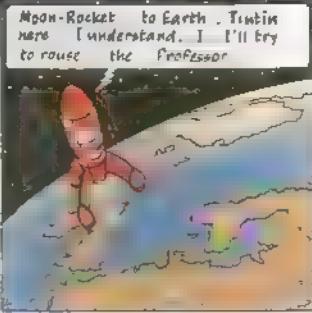


For nearly an hour the rocket
hurles on towards the earth

Earth to Moon-Rocket... Stand by
You have only about 8,000 miles
to go... Get ready to cut the auto-
matic pilot...

Moon-Rocket to Earth... Tintin
here [understand, I'll try
to rouse the Professor

Professor! Professor! We're nearly
home. Wake up. We've got to...
set the automatic pilot...

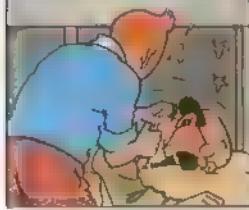


Professor! For goodness' sake!
Professor please
It's no good. I can't
rouse him. Now what's to
be done?

I've... I've simply got to
try myself. There's no
one but me. Oh, I'm
stifling

I must... I must get to
the ladder

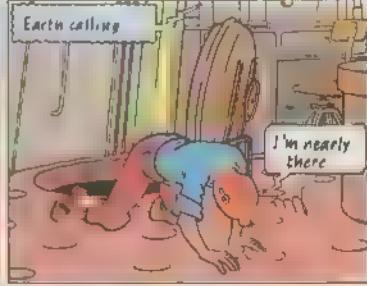
I've done it.
But shall I ever
have the strength?



This awful,
dizziness!

Earth to Moon-Rocket. Are you
in the control cabin?

Earth calling



Earth to Moon-Rocket...
Earth to Moon-Rocket...
Hurry up and set the auto-
matic pilot... Earth to Moon-
Rocket... Can you hear
me?

Moon-Rocket
(Can you hear me?)
Moon-Rocket

Earth to Moon-Rocket. Can you hear me? For
heaven's sake answer!... There's not a moment to
lose! You are plunging to disaster!



It's hopeless. He must have passed out. Quick, Walter, make a tuning signal, as piercing as you possibly can... It's the only way to bring him back to his senses.

Earth to Moon-Rocket! In heaven's name, Tintin, answer!

Yes, we can try

TRIIUUUH

WOOUUUUU

What? Yes yes I the automatic pilot.

He! Tintin here. Stop the whistling. I'm the automatic pilot. I think that's done it.

Ah, just in time!

Well done Tintin. Go and lie on your bunk now. Have you the strength to do that? He! Tintin? Hello?

He must have fainted again. Never mind, he's done the essential thing... I'll dash over to the landing site now.

Rant. We'll keep in touch with you by radio.

WOOUUUUU

the rocket is now 550 miles away.

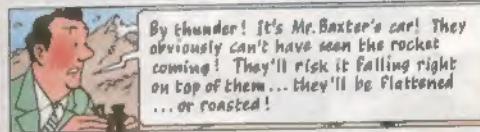
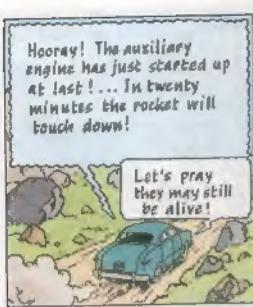
That's it... The nuclear motor has just cut out. The auxiliary engine will start up in a moment or two... But what's happening?

Great Scott!.. The auxiliary engine hasn't started up. The rocket is hurtling towards the ground like a meteor!.. They're going to be smashed to bits!

Observatory to Control... The rocket is only 900 miles from the Earth. In a few moments the auxiliary engine will take over from the nuclear motor.

Hooray! The auxiliary engine has just started up at last! ... In twenty minutes the rocket will touch down!

Let's pray they may still be alive!



Fire engines calling... The rocket has just landed... Mr. Baxter's car is hidden from us by a thick cloud of smoke!...



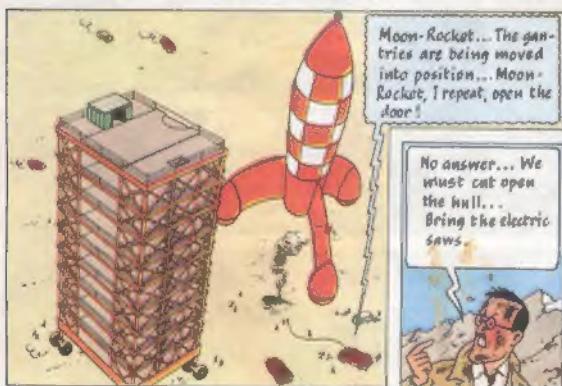
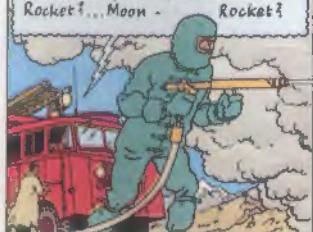
I'm afraid the car must be burning and its occupants... No! no!... There they are!



Ah, Mr. Baxter! What a terrible fright you gave us!... Not hurt?... No burns?...



Calling Moon-Rocket... You have landed!... Open the door... Moon-Rocket!... Moon - Rocket?



No answer... We must cut open the hull... Bring the electric saws.



Professor! ... Tintin! ... Captain! ...



Are we too late? Not a single movement! Hello! HELLO!



Professor! ... Here, Professor! ... Professor! ... It's no good...



Take them into the fresh air at once, and give them oxygen! ... Hurry! ... I'll take care of Tintin; he must be up in the control cabin...



A few minutes later ...

Success! He's opening his eyes ...



I ... where am I ... What's happened? ... The rocket ...

Don't worry now ... You're safe and sound ... back on Earth.



Safe and sound ... Back on Earth? ... On Earth? ... Is it really true ... But the others? ... And Snowy?

The professor and the detective are out of danger. So is Snowy ... But ...



Your friend the Captain ... alas, his condition is far more serious ... and I fear ...

What are you trying to say? ... Where is he?



He's over there ... on that stretcher.

Good heavens!



The Captain! ... It's not possible! ... Captain!

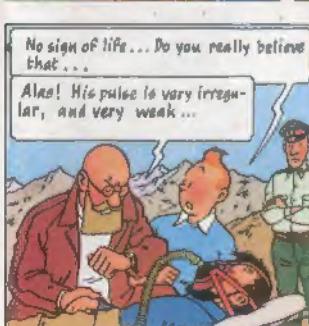


Captain! ... Captain! ... It's me, Tintin ... Please, please wake up! ... We're back home ... Captain! Captain!



No sign of life ... Do you really believe that ...

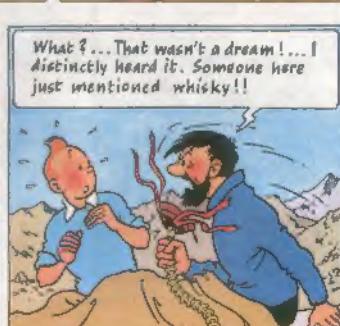
Alas! His pulse is very irregular, and very weak ...



But what more can you expect? ... The man's heart is worn out. But it's not surprising, if what they tell me is true. It seems that he was a great whisky drinker.



What? ... That wasn't a dream! ... I distinctly heard it. Someone here just mentioned whisky!!



Captain! My dear Captain!... Saved... Heavens, what a fright you gave us!

A right! You didn't really believe brave old Captain Haddock was going to let himself be shuffed out, did you? Now then, where is that whisky?

Ah, my dear friend!... What an adventure! What an adventure!

Here comes the conqueror of the Moon!

Cuthbert!... Let me shake your hand, old friend!

Well, Snowy! That's the narrowest escape we've ever had!

Here is the whisky you ordered, sir.

Hooray!

A glass for me too, Captain. I want to drink a toast with you! It's the first time in my life I have tasted this beverage. But this is not the moment to drink camomile tea!

And how!

My friends, we have just lived through the greatest epic of all time: the marks of our feet are inscribed upon the surface of the Moon. And shall we let the dust of centuries hide those glorious marks for ever, gentlemen?

No, that will never be! For I promise you that we shall return there!

What? Us go back there? To the Moon? Me go back to the Moon?!

May I be turned into a bollard, blistering barnacles, if I so much as set foot in your flying coffin again! Never, d'you hear? You interplanetary goat, you! Never!!

I tell you, I've learned just one thing from all this: MAN'S PROPER PLACE...



...IS ON DEAR OLD EARTH!